

Newsletter issue 19 November 2008

[www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk)

# FORWARD MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED



## The Scottish Disabled Parking Bill

### Disabled Parking Postcard Campaign

As you may know, I am currently taking a Member's Bill through the Scottish Parliament designed to ensure that all disabled parking places in Scotland are legally enforceable.

The Bill is currently before the Local Government and Communities Committee and is likely to be considered by the whole Parliament at Stage One in November and finally at Stage Three in January 2008.

As we come closer to end of the legislative process it is crucial that Jackie all MSPs are aware of the difference this Bill will Jackie make to the lives of disabled people.

With that in mind, I am currently running a postcard campaign and I write to ask if would like to be part of that campaign? The aim is to ensure the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Bill is passed giving disabled people the access to local services that they deserve.

If you wish to take part in the campaign please e-mail [jillian.merchant@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:jillian.merchant@scottish.parliament.uk) with your full name and postal address including postcode; I

will then send you out a postcard and all you have to do is sign the back of it and send it free post back to me. I will then ensure that your Local MSP and your seven Regional List MSPs get a copy of the postcard.

The potential impact this campaign is huge and it will help ensure that the voice of disabled people is upper most in mind's of MSPs when it comes to the way they vote in Parliament.

Together we can ensure that this Bill is passed.

If you have any questions about the campaign then please feel

free to contact me at any time. I hope to hear from you soon,  
Best wishes.

From the pen of  
Jackie Baillie  
Jackie Baillie MSP  
Dumbarton Constituency

If postcard not included please contact  
Jillian Merchant, Parliamentary Assistant to  
Jackie Baillie MSP  
MG.16  
The Scottish Parliament  
Tel. 0131 348 5902 to participate



## Coping with Bi-Polar

This letter came to Forward MID 20th August 2008

### One person's view - Bi-Polar Disorder



Around 1 in 100 people in Britain suffer from bi-polar disorder (manic depression) where they experience extreme highs and lows. For me the highs saw me experience periods of euphoria. I was able to do anything I wanted. I was hyperactive, sitting quietly, relaxing, watching T.V. was almost impossible. Sleeping proved difficult, I felt invincible. To me those highs were fantastic, but my family and friends had/have difficulty coping with my condition. It is only now that I realise the hell I put my family & friends through.

The depressive stages were absolute hell for them as well, but they could not understand my illness. Neither could I!! I isolated myself from those I loved and cared for. I could not sleep, was very lethargic and came close to suicide on numerous occasions.



There is help to be found out there, but it takes courage to seek it. Your G. P. can refer you to a psychiatrist, psychologist or a community psychiatric nurse. My G. P. referred me to a psychologist who provided cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) which helped me to be more acceptable of myself and helped me to rid myself of other people's guilt which I carried for most of my adult life.

Local Area Co-ordination gave me tremendous support by encouraging me to get out and about, to meet new people and get involved with group. Through time I became involved with Forward Mid and am involved with "The Walkie Talkies" and "Easy Does it" groups.

I am now learning to live with my condition, so are my family & friends. I still "suffer" from my highs and lows and I manage to cope with life. If you feel you would like to become involved with "The Walkie Talkies" or the "Easy Does it" groups contact

Catherine (LAC) on 0131 454 1875  
Anon.

For more information on Bi-Polar please visit [www.bipolaraware.co.uk](http://www.bipolaraware.co.uk)

### Abstract from Forward MID meeting October minutes

**In Control** - Starts around January 2009, it will run as a pilot with 26 service users from different areas being involved.

**Web site** - Two new contacts onto the web pages, these are Local Area Coordination and Public Transport.

**Quarriers** - are building up a database with information about individual organisations or groups.

**Open Day** - Patient Information Centre at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on Monday 17th November.

**Travel Diaries** - Forward MID Travel Diaries copy of these were given out to the group.

**Newsletter** - Suggestion sought for articles for Newsletter, Personal stories.

## The Princess Royal opens new Drum Riding Centre for disabled club room

Her Royal Highness the princess Royal opened a bright and spacious new club room that provides much improved facilities for disabled riders, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, it will also be used for training and examinations as the Drum aims to remain a centre of excellence in Scotland.

After a parade of riders from all the schools which regularly attend classes entertained the royal party, followed by a short display of dressage to music performed by Sharon Stocks, who has ridden at the Drum for 20 years and who will be representing her country in the 2009 Special Olympics.

The Princess Royal also presented long service medals ranging from 10 to 25 years service to 20 volunteers, and to Ginger' the longest serving pony (20 years).

For more information about sessions please contact :

Ena Gaffney  
Drum Riding for the Disabled  
Drum Estate  
Gilmerton  
Edinburgh  
EH17 8RX



0131-664-5803 day



Princess Anne with Ginger

## Incapacity benefit Change

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) was introduced on 27 October 2008.

It replaces Incapacity Benefit and Income Support, paid because of an illness or disability, for new claimants only. If you already receive Incapacity Benefit, you will continue to receive it. It is intended that recipients move to the new benefit between 2009 and 2013.

Work Capability Assessment is the main assessment for Employment and Support Allowance claims.

It may include a medical assessment if more information is needed about your illness or disability before a decision can be made on your capability for work.

An approved healthcare professional, who has been trained in handling Employment and Support Allowance claims, will assess how your illness or disability affects your capability for work or work related activity, and provide advice to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), which is responsible for administering benefit claims.

In Great Britain, over 2.6 million people depend on incapacity benefits, and yet nine out of ten new customers tell the department of work and pension that they want to return to work. When someone applies for Employment and Support Allowance they will enter a 13 week assessment phase. The Work Capability Assessment will take place during this period. This assessment will look at what you can do instead of what you can not do. There is a body of evidence that people are better off in work - not only financially, but in terms of their health and well-being, their self-esteem and the future prospects for themselves and their family.

Further information about Employment and Support Allowance can be found at [www.dwp.gov.uk/esa/](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/esa/)

## The dating game

Everywhere you look these days you will see dating agencies. They are vowing to get you a partner or friends, but as soon as you mention a physical disability the 3 thousand or so members all live on the other side of the world. Sounds familiar.

The B.B.C. have found a dating agency for disabled people called whispers4u and are looking to make an uplifting documentary on people with disabilities and who are dating. If you would like more information from the B.B.C then please get in touch with Rebecca at [Rebecca.arnold@bbc.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.arnold@bbc.co.uk)

If you would like to join whispers4U, look them up at [www.whispers4u.com](http://www.whispers4u.com) if you have any comments about disabled dating then please contact Forward MID

## epilepsy scotland

Charities merged, on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, Enlighten merged with Epilepsy Scotland to help bring help to nearly 40,000 in Scotland with Epilepsy, Enlighten offered some great services for Lothian and the borders but it was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain the necessary management costs. The merger with Epilepsy Scotland hopes to better the service across all Scotland, if you know better then let Epilepsy Scotland know! Epilepsy head office is in Glasgow and they have a office in Edinburgh.

Epilepsy Scotland, Edinburgh Office, Epilepsy Scotland, 28 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh, EH3 7RN. Telephone: 0131 226 5458 or phone their help line on 0808 800 2200 you can also get help on the world wide web at [www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk](http://www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk)

## Forward Midlothian Independent Disabled

We at Forward mid would like to say a thank you to all the groups that are working together to help make people with Physical disabilities lives more positive. We are steadily working towards a fairer society.

We would like to wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and Good New Year. We will be meeting again in January, If you feel you would like to

know more about Forward MID then please feel free to join as at one of our meetings. If you would like transport or any other information please phone Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471. Our meeting for 2009.



January 2009  
Monday the 12<sup>th</sup>  
At The Red Cross East and Midlothian  
branch  
131 Dalkeith High  
EH22 1BE  
From 2pm until 4pm  
February 2009  
Monday the 9<sup>th</sup>  
At The Red Cross East and Midlothian  
branch  
131 Dalkeith High  
EH22 1BE  
From 2pm until 4pm

## Alternative Publications

The editions of the Forward MID newsletters are available in large print or at [www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk) For alternative publication please E-mail to [eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk](mailto:eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk) or call Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 or write to him at MVA 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE with your request.